



# **The Development and Commercialization of Biodegradable Selectively Branched Detergent Alcohols**

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# Surfactants

**Multi-million ton/ year global business**

**Anionic surfactants are the largest group**

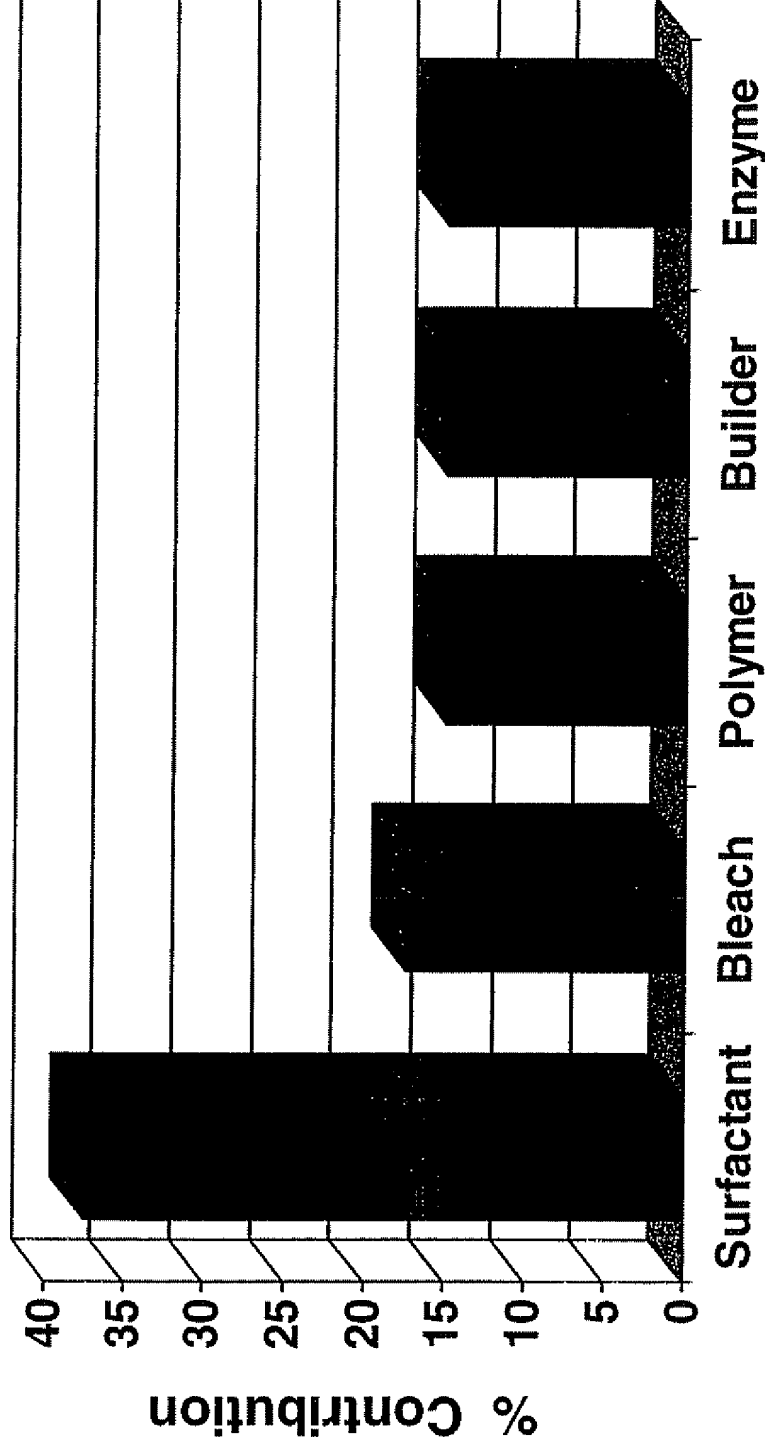
**They wet fabrics and soils; remove dirt and stains**

**The single most important cleaning ingredient in most laundry and household cleaning products**



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# Performance Contribution to Detergency

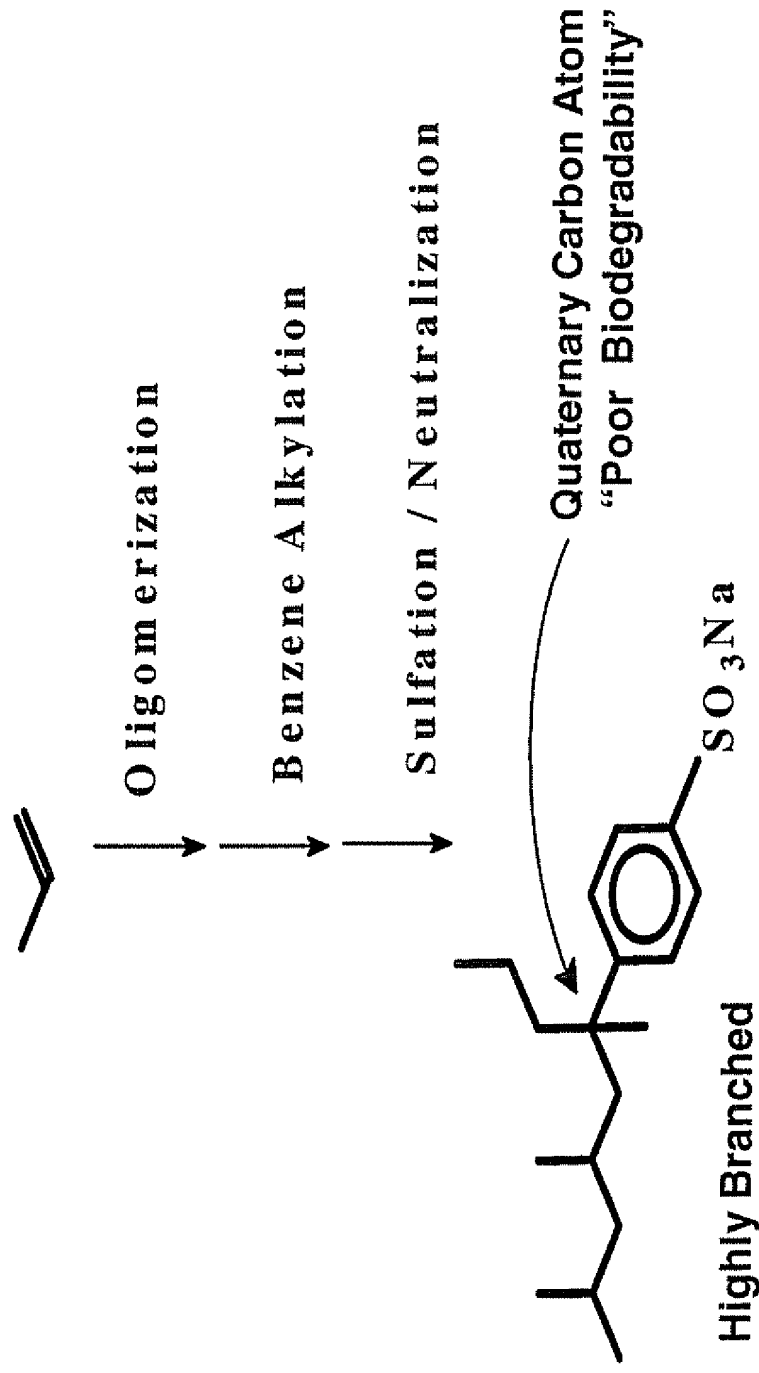


\* G. Baillely et al., *Proceedings of the 5th World Conference on Detergents*, (2003)



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## 1950's Vintage Alkylbenzene Sulfonate





## Surfactant Events – A Need for Innovation

1950's - Highly Branched Alkylbenzene Sulfonates, (ABS)  
slow biodegradation, foaming, aquatic toxicity?

1960's – ABS Regulation begins – Rapid replacement by  
Biodegradable Linear Alkylbenzene Sulfonates,  
Linear Alcohol Sulfates and Linear AES

### A Paradigm is born: “*Alkyl branching is Bad*”

1970's - Movement to lower wash temperatures creates a  
need for better cold water detergency

1980's *The Alkyl Branching Paradigm is Challenged*

2000's - High Solubility Biodegradable, Selectively  
Branched Detergents are commercialized

# Recent Trends in Washing Processes

- 
- Lower Wash Water Temperature
  - Lower Energy Consumption
  - Shorter Wash Times
  - Reduced Water Usage



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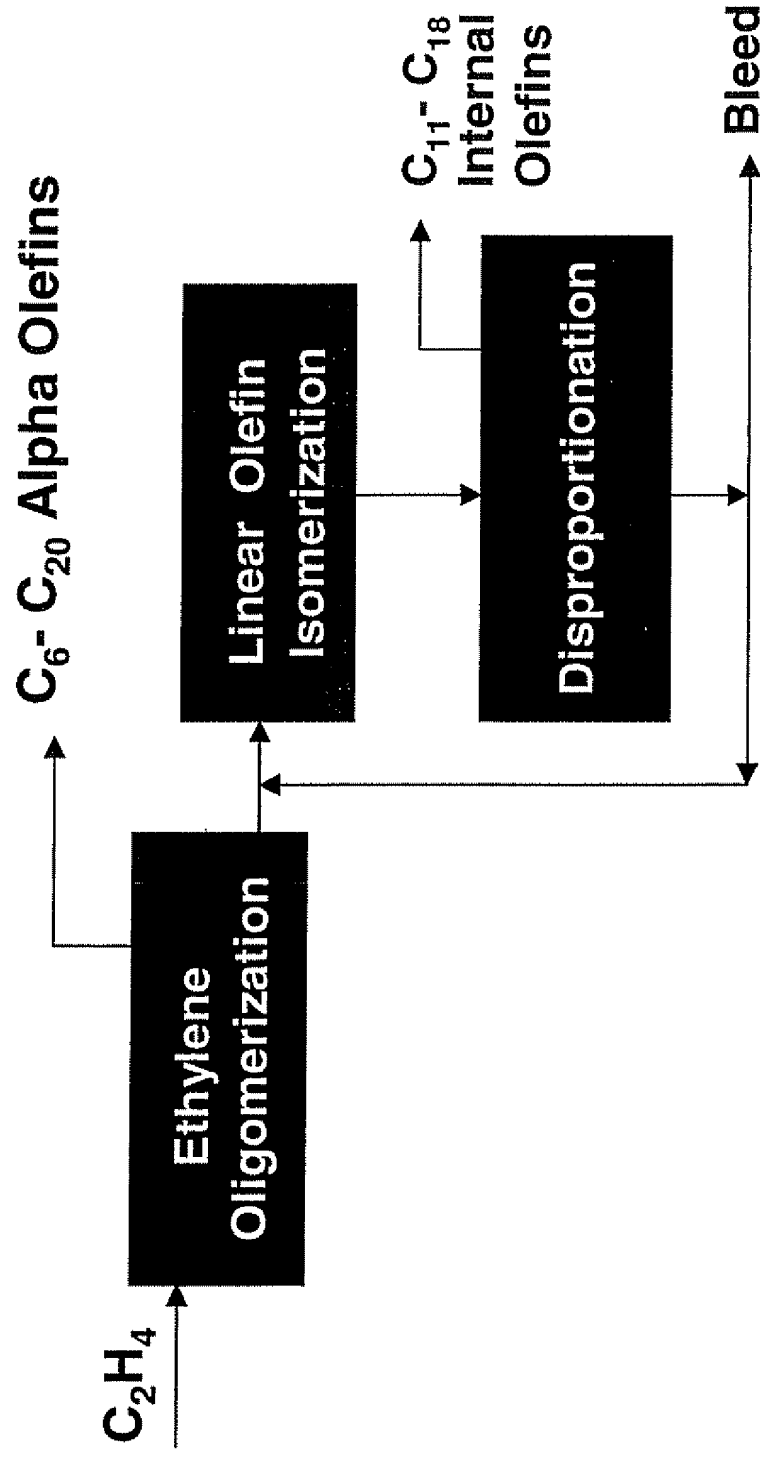
# Desired Surfactant Properties

- Excellent Surface Activity
- Readily Biodegradable
- Superior Cold Water Detergency
- Improved Hard Water Solubility
- Ability to use Less Surfactant
- Affordable and Consistent Production



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# Shell Higher Olefins Process (SHOP)

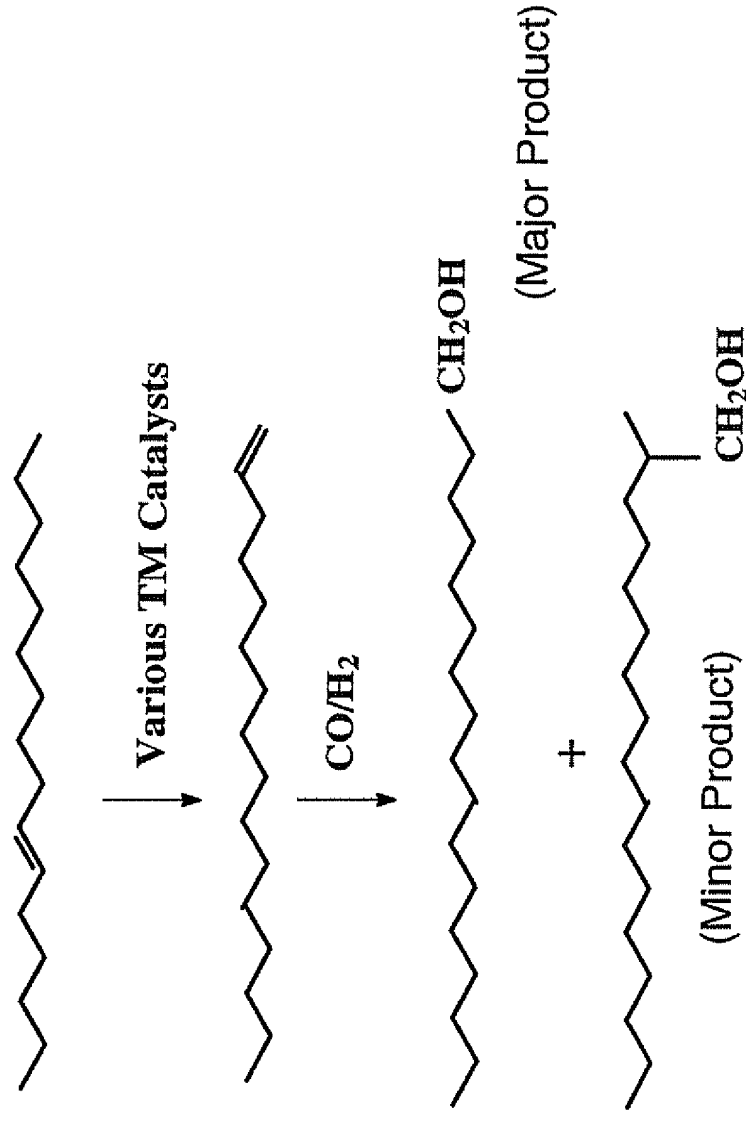






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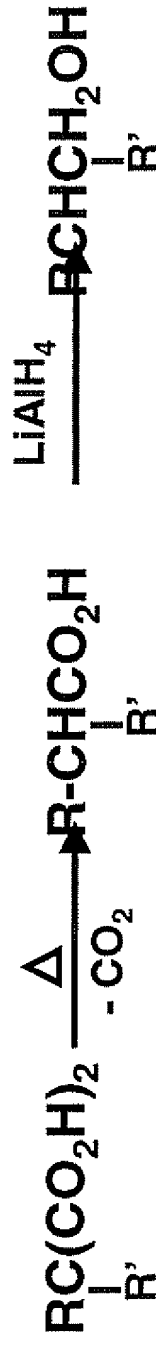
# Shell Hydroformylation Process (SHF)





## Model Compound Studies

### Malonic Ester Synthesis of 2-Alkyl Branched Alcohols



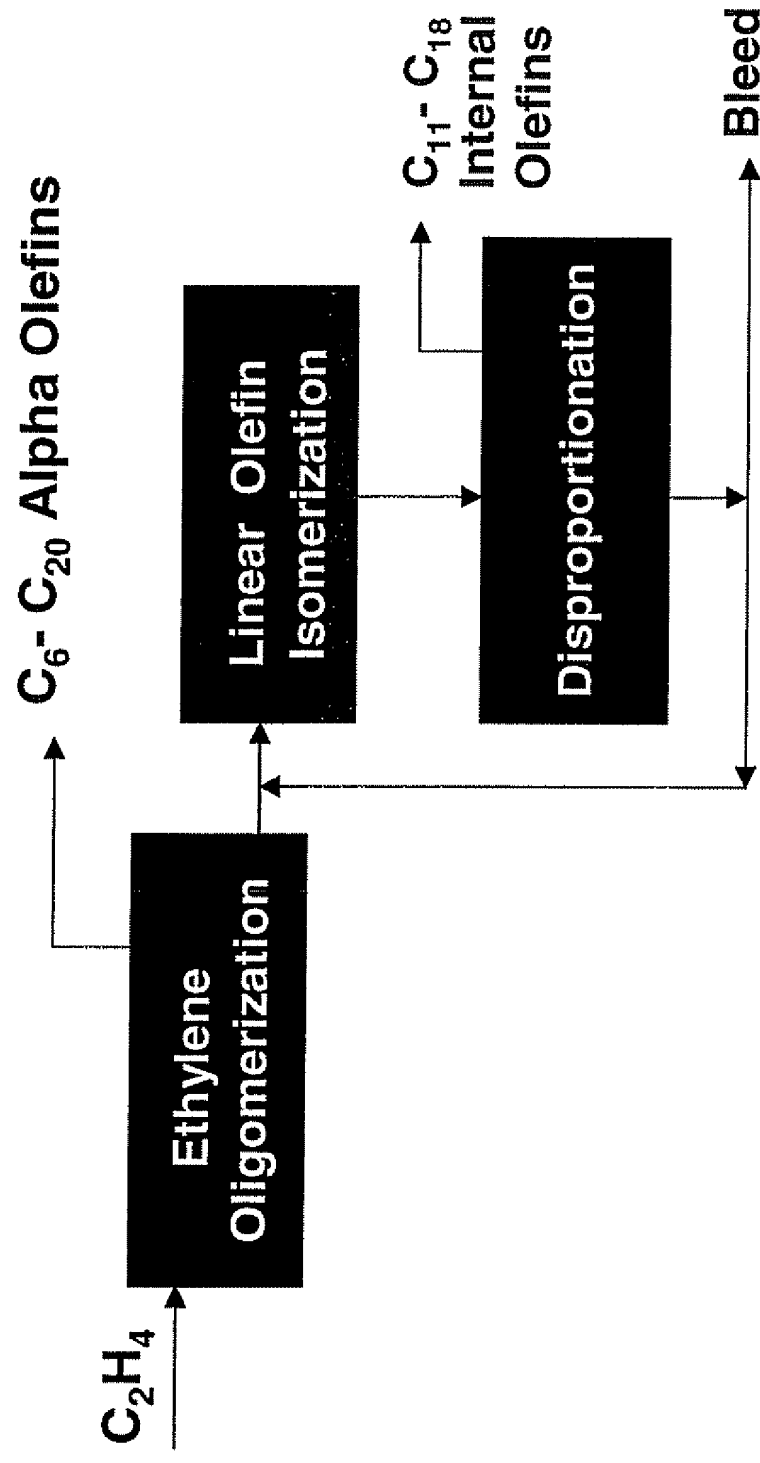
Alcohols were converted to the alcohol sulfate sodium salts by treatment with  $\text{ClSO}_3\text{H}$ , followed by neutralization with  $\text{NaOH}$



# How to Introduce Controlled Branching

- **Controlled Dimerization / Oligomerization of Lower Olefins**
- **Cross Metathesis Schemes**
- **Selective Skeletal Isomerization of Linear Olefins**
  - Use a proprietary, “pore engineered” zeolite catalyst
  - Makes mainly mono-branched olefins with the alkyl groups distributed at beneficial positions along the backbone
- Very low level of quaternary carbon atoms in product

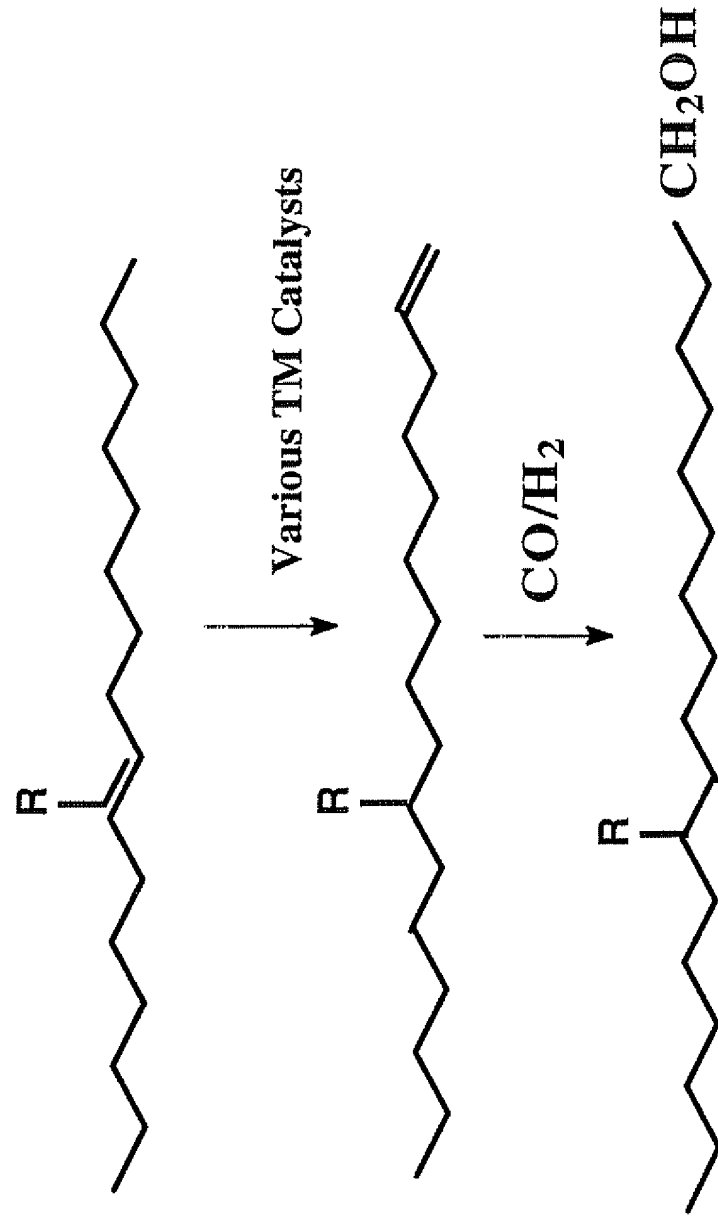
# Shell Higher Olefins Process (SHOP)



# **Skeletal Olefin Isomerization Process**

- **Uses Alpha or Internal Olefins as Feedstocks**
- **Low Severity Operation**
- **Thermodynamic Equilibrium Conversion (>95%)**
- **Very High Selectivity (>98%)**
- **Multiply Regenerable Zeolite Catalyst**
- **Fully Compatible with the SHOP and SHF Processes**
- **Very High Catalyst Turnover Rate**

# Shell Hydroformylation Process

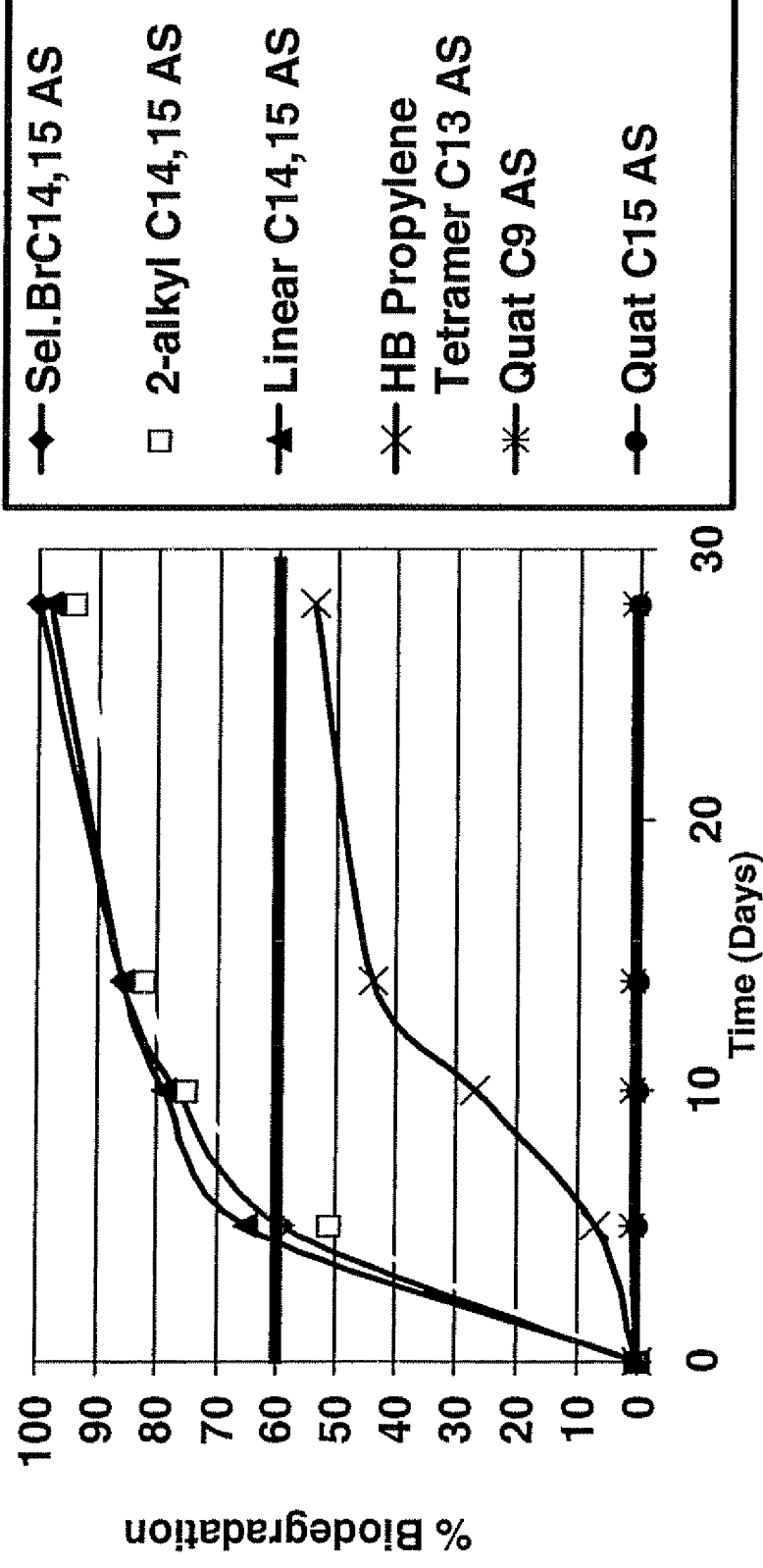


R distributed at desirable positions along backbone

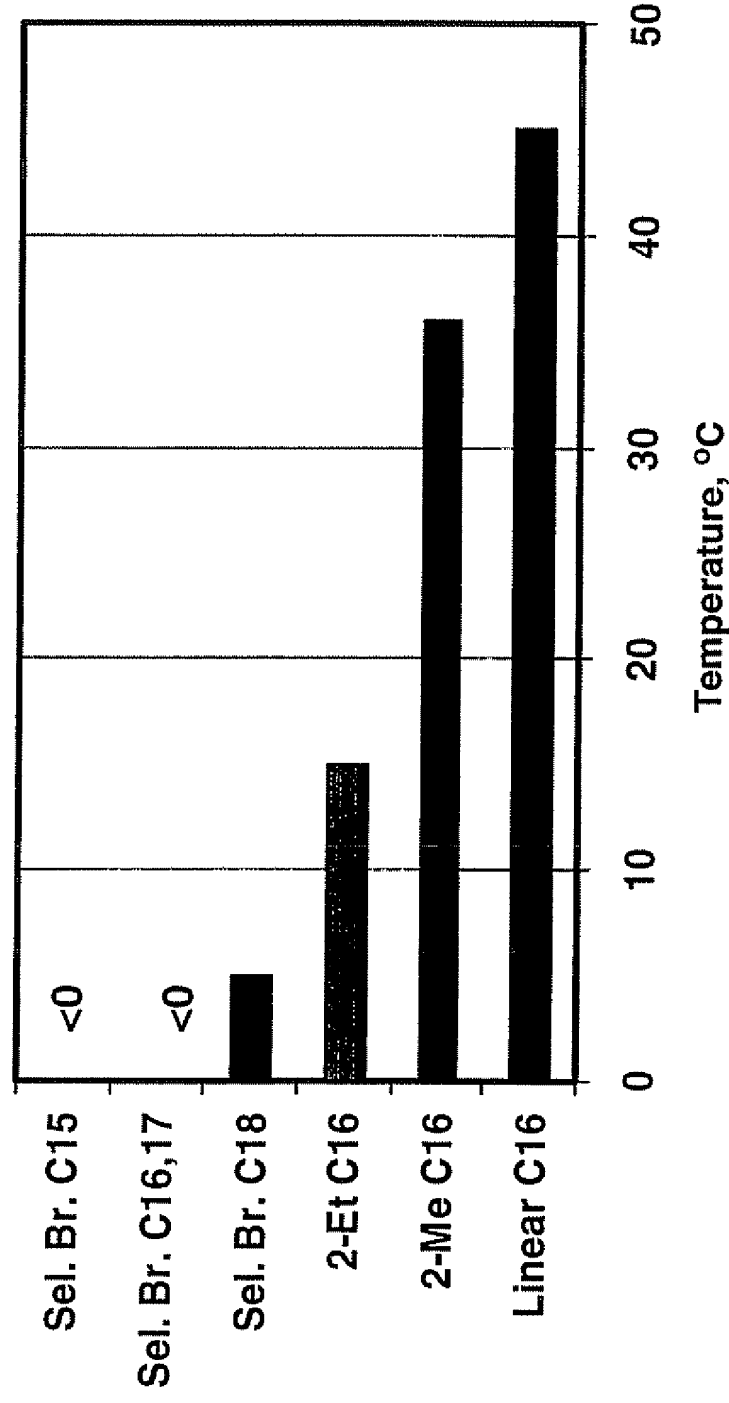


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# Closed Bottle Biodegradation Results for Various Alkyl Alcohol Sulfates

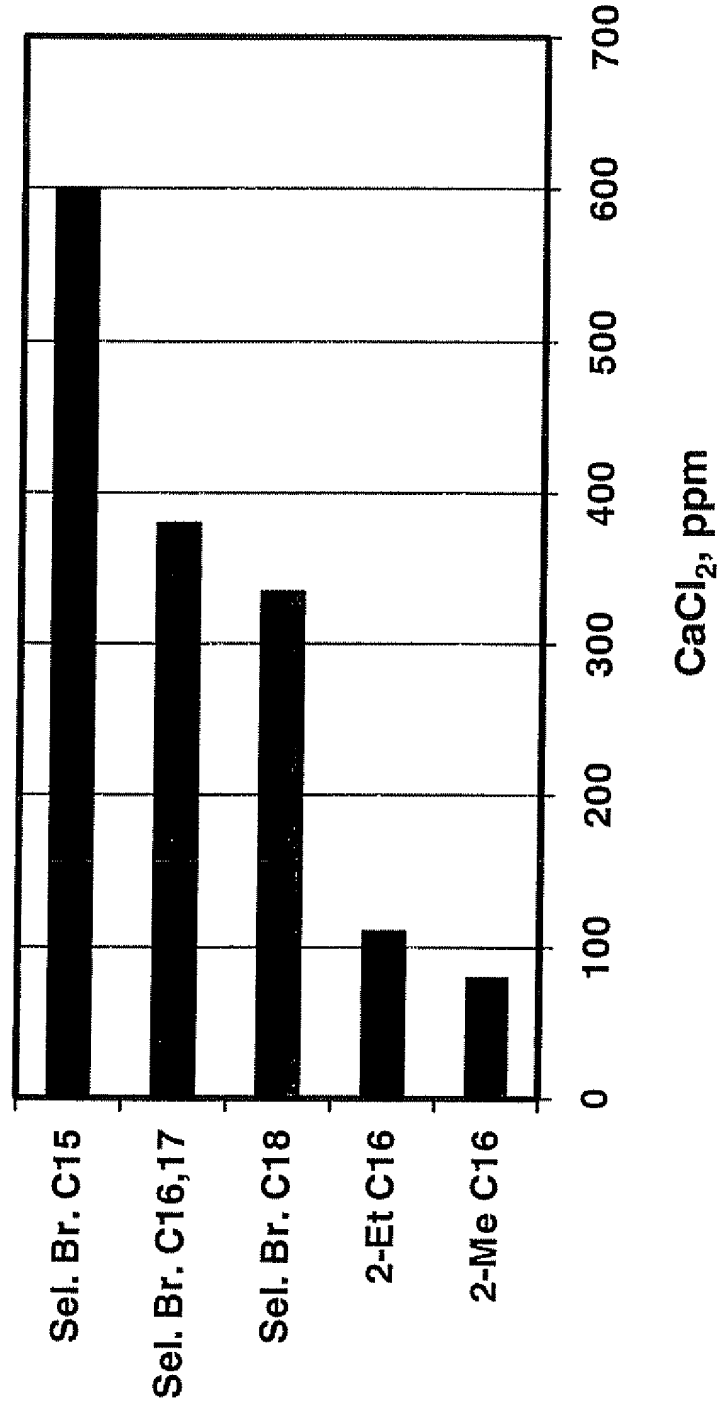


# Krafft Temperature of the new Selectively Branched Alcohol Sulfates

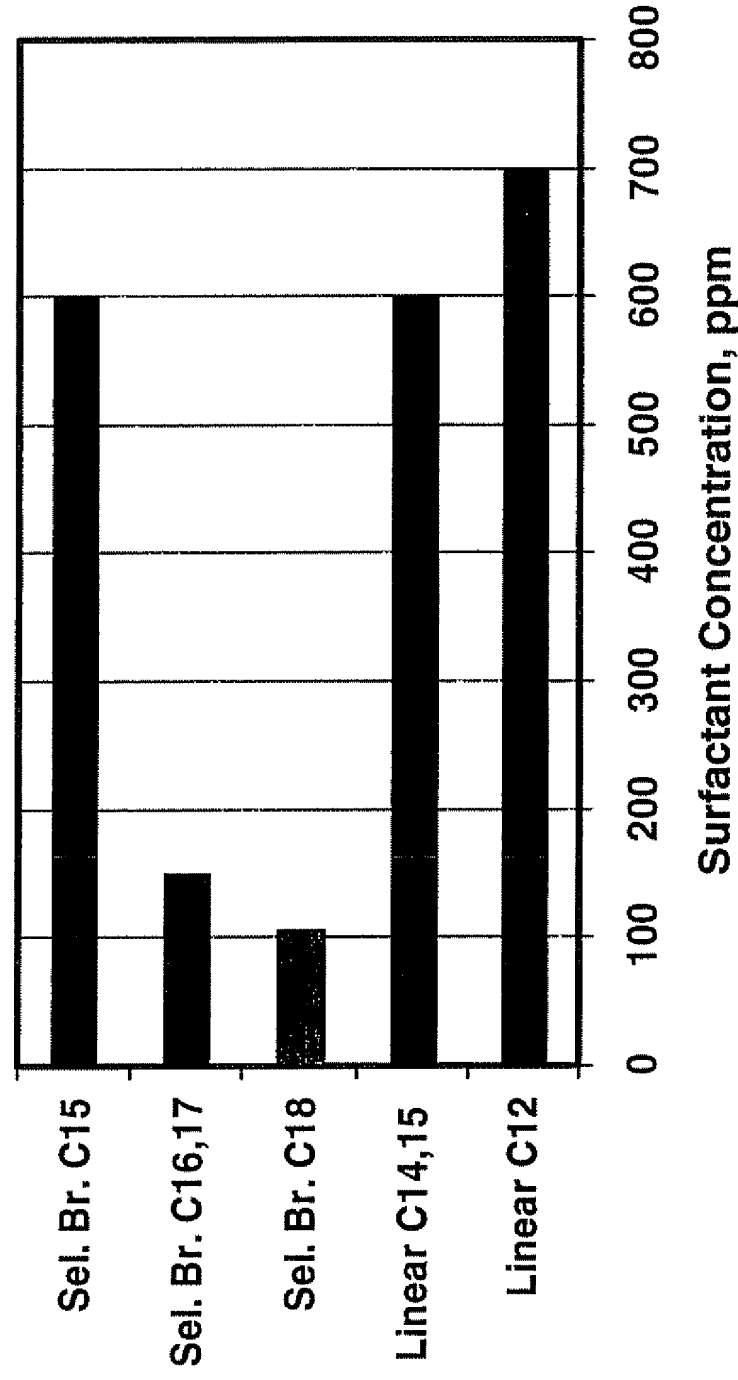




# Calcium Tolerance of the new Selectively Branched Alcohol Sulfates



# Critical Micelle Concentration of the Selectively Branched Alcohol Sulfates

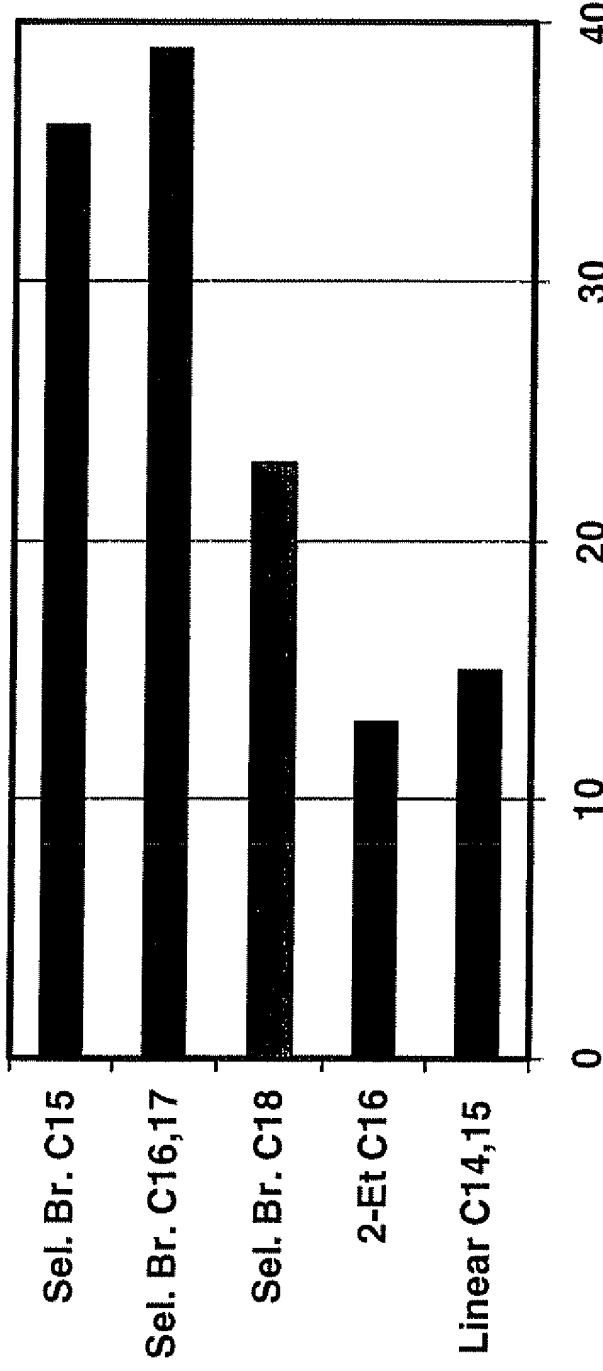




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# Detergency Performance of the new Selectively Branched Alcohol Sulfates

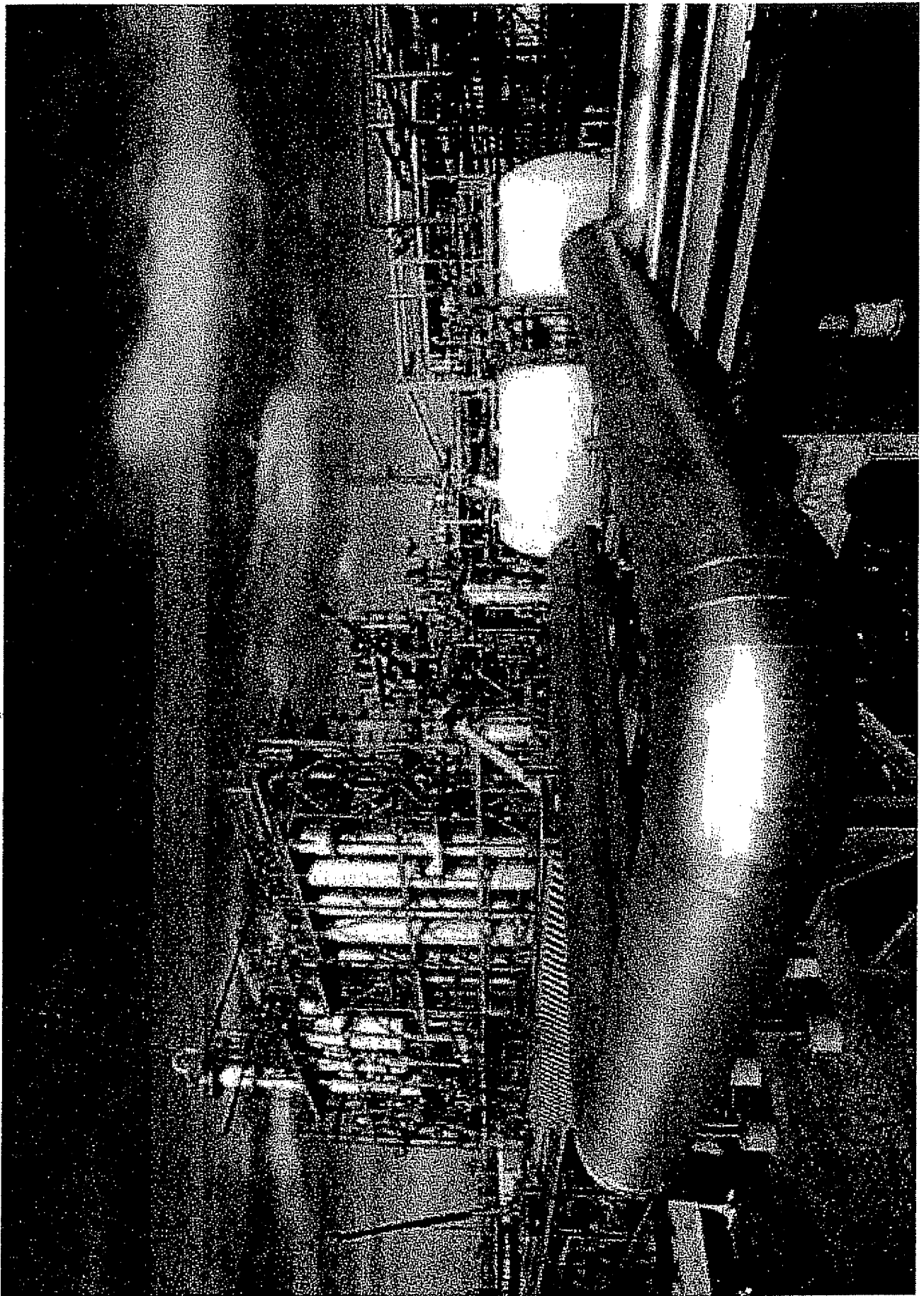
(at 10°C and 150 ppm Water Hardness)



% Soil Removal,  $LSD_{95} = 4$

## Partnering with Procter & Gamble

- P&G is a **Leading Global Supplier** to the Detergent Industry
- P&G conducted independent studies that pointed to a Primary Alcohol with a single methyl branch near the middle of the chain
- Evaluated various Shell “Selectively Branched” Alcohols
- Derivatized and formulated products based on the new alcohols
- A joint decision was made to commercialize the Innovation





# Commercialization

- Product was scaled up in several stages (6, 50 and 3700 tonnes)
  - Allowed Process Modeling and Design Optimization
  - Customer feedback
- P&G worked closely with Shell during the Process
  - HS&E Studies, Alcohol Conversion and Product Formulation
  - Logistics, Product Specifications
  - Market Development Work
- World-Scale Olefin/Alcohol Plant built at Geismar, LA. in 2001
  - On spec product produced within 12 hours of feed-in
  - Breakthrough Technology Confirmed in Operations
- Alcohols successfully formulated into Quick Dissolving Tide®

***“Tide is the most popular laundry detergent used in the USA”***



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## **New Opportunities**

### **▪ Personal Skin Care Products**

- Excellent Emollient / Moisturizer
- Non-oily
- Good Viscosity and Solubility Characteristics
- Biodegradable

### **▪ Industrial Fluids**

- Low Pour Point
- Good Stability

### **▪ Chemical Intermediates**

- Novel Composition
- Reagent for Various Industries

## Acknowledgements

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